



COVID SPREAD BECOMES FASTER

Average R-value (number of people a Covid patient can infect) touched 1.64 on Jan 10 from 0.95 on Dec 2 — an increase of 73% in 48 days

17 states have R-value greater than the national average

These states include Bihar (2.06), UP (2.03) and all five southern states. Maharashtra, MP, Chhattisgarh, Bengal and Jharkhand also have R-value over 1.64

NO INDISCRIMINATE USE OF COVID PILL

Molnupiravir has not been included in national treatment guidelines owing to safety concerns

Contraception must for three months for both men and women taking the pill; otherwise, the child born may have genetic disorders

It can cause defects in a developing fetus and it may affect the reproductive system in youngsters | P9

TAKE YOUR SHARE	Jan 10	Jan 11	Jan 12
TOTAL COPIES	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657
ADDITIONAL	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657
REVENUES	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657
DEBTS	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657	1,33,70,44,657

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WEEKEND AND NIGHT CURFEW EXTENDED TILL MONTH-END

DCs to decide on closing schools; each Assembly segment in B'luu to have CCC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AS Covid-positive cases, including the Omicron variant, are increasing, the state government has extended the weekend and night curfew till January-end. The curfews were to be in force till January 19. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who tested Covid-positive on Monday, held a virtual meeting with Technical Advisory Committee members, ministers and senior officials to discuss issues related to increasing Covid cases in the state.

The CM specifically discussed Corona cases among children. Deputy commissioners of respective districts were authorised to take a decision on closing schools, based on the number of cases, reports from block education officers and health authorities.

Officials were instructed to arrange wards, ICUs and other facilities for children at taluk and district hospitals. Education and health department officials were told to conduct health checkups in schools every fortnight, while the CM directed district health officials to ensure enough medicines at warehouses. The CM instructed officials to take strict action against those holding public meetings, while also asking DCs and superintendents of police to strictly enforce Covid guidelines at public places.

The meeting decided to start 27 Covid Care Centres — one at each Assembly constituency —



Passengers crowd KSR Railway Station in Bengaluru on Tuesday evening as Karnataka has been witnessing a sharp spike in Covid-positive cases | SHIRAM IN

Just 117 patients in ICUs

Compared to the number of active Covid-19 cases in the state, the rate of admission in ICUs is fairly low. As per data, as on January 10, 117 Covid-19 patients are in ICUs — amounting to just 0.19 per cent of the 60,148 active cases reported.

in Bengaluru. The number of tests in the state capital will be increased to 1.30 lakh per day.

Instructions will be issued to monitor the health of those home quarantined and timely distribution of health kits for them. The CM directed officials to strengthen triaging to ascertain whether an infected person needs hospitalisation immediately after getting the test report. The services of house surgeons and final-year nursing students will be utilised for monitoring home isolation and triaging. Bommai told officials to ensure booster doses for frontline workers on priority.

Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra, Education Minister BC Nagesh, TAC Chairman Dr Sudharshan, Chief Secretary P Ravikumar and others were present.

KEEP IN MIND

All rallies, dharmas, protests prohibited
Marriage and other functions permitted but with not more than 200 people in open spaces and 100 people in closed places

Public transport, including Metro, will operate as per seating capacity only

There will be intensive surveillance along the borders with Maharashtra, Kerala and Goa as per the guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Family Welfare

CONTAINMENT MEASURES

The BBMP Chief Commissioner and DCs in districts can impose additional containment measures based on their assessment of the situation

For enforcement of social distancing, the Commissioners of Police, DCs can use the provisions of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc) of 1973

Violators will be liable to be prosecuted against as per the provisions of Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, besides legal action under Section 188 of the IPC

FOR FESTIVALS

During Vaikunta Ekadashi, poojas can be conducted within temple premises. Only 50 devotees, who have been double vaccinated, will be allowed at a time

MINISTER, 2 CONG LEADERS TEST POSITIVE

Bengaluru: Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister JC Madhu Swamy, Congress leaders HM Revanna and MLC CM Ibrahim tested positive for Covid on Tuesday. During the inauguration of the Mekedatu Padayatra on Sunday, Revanna had shared the dais with KPCC president D K Shivakumar, Opposition leader in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjuna Kharge among others. Ibrahim had returned to Bengaluru on the eve of the padayatra after attending the Congress legislature party (CLP) meeting at Shivakumar's residence in Kanakapura. Meanwhile, Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said he is voluntarily going into self-isolation till Wednesday, as he was a primary contact of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday evening. P4

PM INQUIRES ABOUT CM'S HEALTH

Bengaluru: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday called Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who is in home quarantine after testing Covid positive, over phone and inquired about his health. A statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office stated that during the five-minute call, the PM suggested that the CM take suitable medical treatment. Bommai got the call when he was holding a video conference with officers. Bommai also informed the PM about the Covid situation in the state and the virtual meeting he held with officers on Tuesday.

Yogi minister quits, may join SP, BJP loses OBC heavyweight

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

IN a major setback for the BJP, senior OBC leader and labour minister in the Uttar Pradesh government Swami Prasad Maurya quit his post on Tuesday citing ideological differences and the alleged negligence of the Yogi Adityanath government towards the backward classes, farmers, youth and small traders.

Later, three MLAs supporting him — Brajesh Prajapati, Roshan Lal Varma and Bhagwati Sagar — also quit the party. Maurya claimed more BJP legislators would leave the party. "The edge of my blow would be felt in the days to come with a series of resignations from the BJP," he said, adding that he would announce his future course of action on January 14.

Maurya also resigned from the BJP and is expected to join the Samajwadi Party (SP) along with his supporters. Meanwhile, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav tweeted an undated photograph of him with Maurya, saying, "We welcome the leader of social justice and equality in SP."

The development came on a day when UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath, deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya and state BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh met the party's top leadership in Delhi to finalise the names of candidates for

the upcoming state polls.

According to sources, Maurya was in touch with the SP chief and the two discussed the political future of Maurya's daughter Sanghamitra, a BJP MP from Badaun who had in 2019 defeated Akhilesh's cousin Dharmendra Yadav.

BJP insiders said Maurya wanted to contest the upcoming polls from a seat other than his constituency Padrauna. He also sought a ticket for his son Ashok and two dozen partymen close to him. However, the BJP's top leadership did not respond favourably.

Maurya and the three MLAs had switched over to the BJP from the BSP in 2016 ahead of the 2017 polls. P10

APEX COURT REGISTRY SITTING ON CBI PLEA IN MARAN CASE

Remember the MTNL rip-off by Dayanidhi Maran when he was Union telecom minister? He had a secret and un-billable telephone exchange that had 756 multimedia high-speed lines installed at his homes in Chennai and linked to Sun TV illegally. For years, the Marans tried to misuse even the judicial process to delay the trial, but now it is on in full steam. Nine months ago, the CBI moved the SC for permission to launch further probe so as to add Sun TV as accused, but the registry is yet to list it for hearing. Will judicial delay let the Marans off the hook, wonders

S Gurumurthy
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19 more Cong leaders booked for padayatra

ENS @ Kanakapura

AS Congress continued with its Mekedatu padayatra for the third day on Tuesday, the Ramanagara district administration booked 19 more Congress leaders for organising the rally.

Though Congress leaders had planned a mega event to mark the conclusion of the rally at National College Grounds in Bengaluru on January 19, they may scale it down so as not to attract Covid-related action against the participants. P4

EXPRESS READ Deadline for filing IT returns extended to March 15

New Delhi: The government on Tuesday extended till March 15 the deadline for corporates to file Income Tax returns. The deadline to file tax audit report and transfer pricing audit report for 2020-21 fiscal, too, has been extended till February 15. This is the third extension given for filing the income tax return for the 2020-21 fiscal for corporates.

26 fall ill after chemical leak in Mangaluru

Mangaluru: As many as 26 labourers of a fish processing factory at Baikampady in Mangaluru were admitted to a hospital after a chemical leak at the factory on Tuesday. Of them, 10 were discharged after being examined, while the rest are reportedly out of danger and kept under observation. P5

Toy cluster to start operations by April

Bengaluru: Manufacturing units at the toy cluster at Koppal in North Karnataka are all set to start their operations from April this year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate the cluster. The civil works are going on and are scheduled to be completed in the next two to three months. P4

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